

the United States of America. And I watched the Nation vilify the men and women who work at this Agency.

So now, as we work under the current law—which will expire; make no mistake, it will expire—we don't have it together to pass a new law. So they have been vilified for what they have done. They have been vilified for what they have done, in many instances attacked by their neighbors, their children picked on and bullied because their parents work at this Agency. Morale was at a low ebb. Finally, now we are trying to deal with and cope with that. They are proud of their work. And what are we doing? We can't even pass a law. We can't even pass a law. I think that is absolutely outrageous.

I am so sorry we are going home. I am so sorry we are going home. So now we will come back next Sunday. I really urge those people—who I know are of good will and well-intentioned—to really work to find a way that when we come back next Sunday, we will be able to vote and move forward and not end up in this ongoing parliamentary quagmire.

I worry about our country, and I worry about our ability to govern. This is as serious as it gets. What is the role of a National Security Agency? To be able to operate and function in a way that is constitutional, legal, authorized, and obviously of necessity.

So I really feel very strongly about this. And I have watched all this go back and forth. So we spent hours and days and days and days on all of these amendments on trade. That is good. I am glad we did it. But I am not glad we took that long. We had this bill. We knew we had this bill. We waited until the last minute. We got ourselves into a jackpot. Now we really have to find our way out.

I just cannot speak more forcibly and enough about this. Well, I will have more to say next week. But I really urge others to do their very best. I know there are people here, such as my colleague Senator FEINSTEIN and others, who have worked on this.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION FUNDING ACT OF 2015

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 89, H.R. 2353.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2353) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor

carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, is there going to be a unanimous consent request made at this point?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair understands there will be.

Mr. DURBIN. I will reserve the right to object at that point.

Mr. President, in the interest of time—I know it is early in the morning—I would like to make a statement. I am not going to object to proceeding to this measure, but I would like to make a matter of record what I am sure the Senator from South Dakota already knows: that absent our action at this moment, the Federal highway program authority will expire May 31.

We have just spent the better part of the evening contemplating the expiration of important law relative to our national security, and we have not resolved it.

What is happening here, of course, is a request for a 60-day extension of the Federal highway program. I might say—and I am sure the Senator from South Dakota is well aware of this—this is the 33rd short-term extension of our Federal highway program.

I think all of us understand that the program that once was considered to be the centerpiece of America's infrastructure and its economy has now deteriorated to the point where we are extending it for 1 month, 2 months, and 3 months at a time. Frankly, it does not serve our country and it doesn't serve our economy. It is a reflection on the lack of leadership by those who have the authority in committees and in the House and Senate to propose a measure that becomes a long-term highway program.

I just want to make it clear that instead of enacting a 6-year transportation program worthy of our great Nation, this Congress continues to limp along down a political highway of excuses. It is coming to an end.

There have been lengthy discussions in our Democratic caucus that these continued short-term extensions are unacceptable in this great Nation. And I would just say that although we will agree to this 60-day extension, we are serving notice on the majority leader in the Senate as well as the Speaker to do their job and to enact a law that provides the kind of infrastructure that could build America's economy.

So I will not object to this request, but notice is given that in this 60 days, it is time for this Congress to act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on the third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (H.R. 2353) was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. KING, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE)

1469. A bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF PETER LEVINE TO BE DEPUTY CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

NOMINATION OF PAUL A. FOLMSBEE, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF MALI

NOMINATION OF STAFFORD FITZGERALD HANEY TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA

Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Executive Calendar Nos. 83, 126, and 128, and that the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that following disposition of the nominations, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.